Amendments to the Specification:

Please replace paragraph [64] with the following amended paragraph:

[64] The full length cDNA of *AtNHX1* was obtained by RT-PCR and cloned into pCR2.1-TOPO vctor (Invitrogen). The sequence was confirmed by sequencing the full open reading frame. The full length cDNA was then subcloned into yeast vector pYPGE15 by using BamH1 and EcoR1 cloning sites. Site-directed mutagenesis was carried out by following the instruction of QuikChange Site-Directed Mutagenesis Kit (Stratagene). The primes that was used for generation SM-23 are as follows: SM-23-F, ggagacaatttgatgactgcttcatgcgacccgtc (SEQ ID NO:17); SM-23-R, gacgggtcgcatgaagcagtcatcaaattgtctcc (SEQ ID NO:18). For the cloning of truncated *AtNHX1*, the truncated cDNA was amplified by PCR and cloned into pYPGE15 vector. The primers for the truncated *AtNHX1* cloning are as follows: EXCH-5, agctaggatccggatctagaagaagataacaatgttgg (SEQ ID NO:19); EXCH-DL-1, agctgaattcctagggtacaaagccacgacctc (SEQ ID NO:20); EXCH-DL-2, agctgaattcctacaagaagccacgtatactg (SEQ ID NO:21); EXCH-DL-3, agctgaattcctaagataacatgctcgtggtg (SEQ ID NO:22). All sequence were verified by sequencing.

Please add the paper copy of the sequence listing enclosed in the Appendix, pages 1-28, to the end of the application.